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Chairman: Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Ghana)
later: Mr. Bhattarai (Vice-Chairman) (Nepal)
later: Mr. Effah-Apenteng (Chairman) (Ghana)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/56/L.40/Rev.1)

1. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the Group of 77 and China for Fifth Committee matters, stressed that the late submission of documents disrupted the smooth functioning of the Committee. Indeed, some items that were to be considered during the first part of the Assembly's resumed session had had to be eliminated from the agenda. The Committee had not been provided with all the relevant reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in writing and lacked complete documentation for a number of items scheduled for consideration that week. The Group of 77 and China noted with concern that reports that had been requested under General Assembly resolutions had not been prepared by the Secretariat and were not even included in the programme of work. The Secretariat should provide an explanation for the late issuance, or non-issuance, of documentation. The Group of 77 and China reiterated their request to have that chronic problem addressed seriously in order to ensure that the Secretariat complied with the six-week rule reaffirmed every year by the General Assembly. In that context, they stressed the need for implementation of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 54/248 and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

2. The Group of 77 and China requested that recently announced cutbacks in conference and other support services should be considered under agenda item 123 on the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. The Group intended to make a statement on that important question, which was having a negative impact on the work of the Organization and in particular, on its own functioning.

3. With regard to human resources management, if the Under-Secretary-General for Management would be briefing the Fifth Committee on the financial situation of the United Nations, he should do so during the current week in order to afford delegations an opportunity to make their comments the following week, in accordance with the usual practice. The Group of 77 and China concurred with the views expressed by the European Union on the importance of the issue and trusted that the current procedure would be followed in dealing with it.

4. The Group welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa (A/56/672) and the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/711). The relocation of the regional, subregional and country offices of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes in Addis Ababa and the expansion of the Organization's humanitarian and development activities in the region had led to increased demand for office space. Since a delay in approving the funds might lead to higher costs in the long run, as indicated in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/56/711, para. 8), a decision on the issue should be based on the Secretary-General's proposals, with which the Advisory Committee had concurred.

5. With regard to standards of accommodation for air travel, she stressed the importance of the modalities of issuance and reimbursement of airline tickets. Many delegations had noticed that tickets purchased from their capitals cost much less than those arranged by the Secretariat through its designated travel agencies. The Group of 77 and China wished to see a detailed statement showing the difference in the cost of airline tickets issued by the designated agency and those available in various capitals. The Group had also noted with regret undue delays in the reimbursement of tickets not purchased through the designated travel agency and would appreciate information on procedures for reimbursement and suggestions for improvement. In that connection, it supported the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on standards of accommodation for air travel.

6. The Group attached particular importance to the items on financing of the two International Tribunals and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), gratis personnel, and the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), and trusted that the Committee would give them proper consideration. The Group would be prepared to consider the report on public information activities in the context of the comprehensive review to be undertaken at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

7. The Group would appreciate additional information on the arrears of the former Yugoslavia under the agenda item on the scale of assessments and would be interested in other delegations' views on how

to deal with the issue, taking into account its political, legal and technical dimensions.

8. **Mr. Lizano** (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and supported the proposed programme of work.

9. It was regrettable to note, once again, the adverse impact on the Committee's work of delays in the issuance of documents and reports. Although in many cases the volume of documentation posed problems, the Secretariat must take appropriate steps to remedy the situation.

10. The report on agenda item 125 lacked specific recommendations and information that might make it possible to take informed decisions. In relation to item 126, the report on the mandatory age of separation was not sufficiently detailed; it might be appropriate to take up that issue in conjunction with other pending reports. With regard to items 131 and 132, the Rio Group attached particular importance to the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and supported the need for appropriate financing; it hoped that the final budgets would be adopted at the current part of the resumed session, so as not to impede the operation of the Tribunals.

11. In relation to item 130, the Rio Group stressed the importance of an appropriate internal oversight mechanism in the Organization and the need for follow-up to the reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), and for prompt implementation of its recommendations. In relation to item 158, the Rio Group attached great importance to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and stressed the need to approve adequate resources.

12. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation fully supported the statement made by the representative of Cuba on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and endorsed the need to take concrete measures to deal with the problem of the late issuance of documents. It was unacceptable that the Committee's programme of work should be determined by the status of preparedness of documentation, thereby making the Committee a hostage of the Secretariat. It had become standard practice for documents to be submitted late.

13. His delegation attached great importance to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), and regretted the Secretariat's failure to comply with the General Assembly's request for a report to be submitted at the current part of the Assembly's resumed session. Before approving its programme of work, the Committee should devote an entire meeting to the issue of the late issuance of documents, with the presence of representatives of the departments concerned.

14. His delegation agreed that the Committee needed to give in-depth consideration to the question of the reduction of the budget for conference services.

15. **Ms. Martin** (Officer-in-Charge of the Personnel Management and Support Service, Department of Peacekeeping Operations), responding to the inquiry by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, said that the Secretary-General would submit a report in compliance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 54/266 and paragraphs 2 and 3 of resolution 55/264. The review of the matter had not yet been completed; once completed, a full report would be made to the General Assembly.

16. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation was well aware that the issue had been raised in the General Assembly resolutions mentioned; normally, the Secretary-General would be expected to respond to all questions raised by the General Assembly. His delegation had hoped to receive the report on UNDOF at the main part of the Assembly's fifty-sixth session, but had shown flexibility in agreeing for it to be submitted at the first part of the resumed session. It was incomprehensible that a report only two or three pages long would take over 10 months to complete. While documents that were of interest to the Secretariat were produced expeditiously, documents that were of interest to delegations were subject to delay. The Secretariat must provide a convincing response as to why it was not implementing General Assembly resolutions. It was not enough to say that a report would be provided.

17. **Ms. Brzak-Metzler** (Chief of the Compensation and Classification Policy Unit, Office of Human Resources Management), referring to the issue raised by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic concerning the conditions of service of locally recruited staff at UNDOF, said that the Policy Unit had been requested to provide input to the report on

UNDOF. It had taken a number of measures and was engaged in discussions with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations aimed at finding a solution to the problem.

18. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation had asked a specific question as to why, after 10 months, a report had still not been submitted. If the Secretariat was unable to respond, he would demand an investigation.

19. **The Chairman** said that the concerns of the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic had been noted.

20. **Ms. Silot Bravo** (Cuba) said that her delegation had asked some questions to which it wanted answers. It sought additional information about the tentative dates of issuance of the reports of the Advisory Committee on those reports of the Secretary-General that had been issued, and, in cases where the Advisory Committee's reports had been issued, an explanation of why they were not being taken up at the current part of the resumed session.

21. **Mr. Bhattarai** (Nepal), *Vice-Chairman*, took the Chair.

Agenda item 130: Reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*) (A/56/83, A/56/620, A/56/689, A/56/733, A/56/759 and A/56/823)

22. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), replying to questions asked at the previous meeting, said, with reference to the question raised by the representative of Japan concerning allegations of abuse of refugee children in some West African countries, that OIOS was currently investigating those allegations and was therefore not at liberty to comment on them.

23. On the question raised by the representative of Australia, OIOS would monitor the refugee smuggling issue with a view to providing updates. The comments made by the United States representative had been relayed to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and an official would appear before the Committee.

24. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said, with reference to the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in

operational funds and programmes, updated views (A/56/823), that his delegation was pleased to note that various funds and programmes had implemented the recommendations of OIOS. He sought clarification of the phrase "joint horizontal audit" in paragraph 20.

25. His delegation welcomed the thorough report on the investigation into allegations of misconduct and mismanagement of the "boat project" at the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) (A/56/689), although it had hoped to have the report before the budget negotiations the previous fall. The indications of mismanagement and waste of resources at ODCCP were disturbing and it would therefore be interesting to know whether recommendations 4 to 7 had been implemented since the report was issued. He would also like to know whether the low staff morale mentioned in the report on the inspection of programme management and administrative practices in ODCCP (A/56/83) had improved.

26. His delegation was concerned that the investigation into allegations of refugee smuggling at the Nairobi Branch Office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (A/56/733) had uncovered serious problems, but it commended OIOS for its quick response and innovative approach in assembling an international task force to handle the investigation. Since the pressures that had originally created the problem remained, in Kenya and other areas, such as West Africa, his delegation looked forward to follow-up reports and laid particular stress on recommendation 6, whereby the UNHCR Inspector General should establish a procedure for speedy referral to OIOS of information obtained via the external reporting process relating to UNHCR staff wrongdoing.

27. With regard to the report on the inspection of the administrative and management practices of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (A/56/620), his delegation would welcome an update on the status of the recommendation in paragraph 79 that the Office of Human Resources Management should undertake a review of the current human resources situation in Nairobi and prepare a paper for consideration by the Secretary-General. Some innovative thinking would be required to overcome the chronic problems in recruiting staff for Nairobi and other locations where staff seemed reluctant to go.

28. The interesting report on the audit of UNHCR private sector fund-raising activities (A/56/759) raised the question of whether OIOS had done work on private sector fund-raising by other organizations in the United Nations system and whether any systemic issues were involved.

29. *Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

30. **Mr. Kadiri** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group welcomed the news that measures were being taken to correct the issues addressed in the inspection of the administrative and management practices of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) (A/56/620). The Group was deeply concerned about the high level of post vacancies, especially at higher staffing levels, not only at Nairobi but also at other African duty stations, and would like to know what ideas OIOS might have on how to resolve that chronic situation, which had been the subject of many General Assembly resolutions. The Group strongly concurred with the view expressed by OIOS in paragraph 56 of its report that there was no basis for the current split between regular and extrabudgetary funding of posts. It supported the recommendation in paragraph 79 that the Office of Human Resources Management should be asked to undertake a review and prepare a paper on the human resources situation at UNON and would like the same to be done for other African duty stations. More broadly speaking, despite General Assembly resolution 52/220, the increase in the regular budget component for the biennium 2002-2003 still did not bring the ratio of regular budget to extrabudgetary funding for UNON into line with the ratios for the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna.

31. **Ms. Chebomui** (Kenya) said that her delegation supported the statement made by Morocco on behalf of the Group of African States. The OIOS report on the inspection of the administrative and management practices of UNON (A/56/620) provided a clear diagnosis of the problems hampering delivery of quality services. Concerted pragmatic measures were required to bring the operational structure of UNON into line with those at the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna. Her delegation concurred with the conclusions and with all of the recommendations contained in the report. She would appreciate clarification of the purpose of the suggestion in paragraph 79 that the compensation packages given by

other Kenya-based multinational and international organizations should be analysed.

32. Her delegation strongly urged the implementation of all recommendations contained in the report on the investigation into allegations of refugee smuggling at the Nairobi Branch Office of UNHCR (A/56/733). Kenya was thankful for its relative peace and security that made it a haven for refugees, but there was no doubt that the massive influx of refugees was having a serious impact on the country in the form of increased small arms trafficking and the resulting violent crime, as well as both drug and refugee smuggling. Kenya was fully committed to combating the inhuman crime of refugee smuggling. Some of those involved had already been arrested, but it was clear that a wide network was involved, and diligent police efforts would continue.

33. **Ms. Sanchez Lorenzo** (Cuba) said that the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (A/56/823) raised several concerns. The intent of paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 48/218 B was that OIOS should assist the operational funds and programmes in enhancing their internal oversight mechanisms, not that it should itself become a mandatory oversight mechanism for them. Moreover, by resolution 54/244, the General Assembly had decided to review the question after receiving an updated report. Her delegation considered it inappropriate that most entities had implemented the Secretary-General's recommendations contained in that report (A/55/826 and Corr.1), when the report had not yet been endorsed by the General Assembly. Since it appeared that OIOS was imposing the mechanism of oversight committees on the funds and programmes, contrary to the spirit and letter of resolution 48/218 B, she would appreciate clarification as to how the Secretariat intended to proceed with those entities that preferred to rely on their current audit mechanisms. Her delegation would like to take up the entire issue in informal consultations.

34. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation endorsed the statements of Morocco and Kenya. With regard to the report on the investigation into allegations of refugee smuggling (A/56/733), he would like clarification of what it had cost to enlist the help of outside investigators. Perusal of the OIOS report on the administrative and management practices of UNON (A/56/620) had raised the question of whether a uniform approach should be followed in

reviewing the management of all United Nations entities. His delegation strongly approved the recommendation in paragraph 73 (b) that a Protocol Officer should be designated at UNON. It also welcomed the recommendation in paragraph 79 that a report should be prepared on options for helping UNON to achieve the same status as other United Nations headquarters duty stations, but would like to know what options OIOS might suggest. Although a policy of enforced mobility between duty stations might be a means of resolving UNON staffing problems, it was surely not the sole or necessarily the best solution. The option of incentives should definitely be considered as part of a multi-pronged approach.

35. The report on the audit of UNHCR private sector fund-raising activities (A/56/759) did not include recommendations, although paragraph 25 alluded to the positive steps taken by UNHCR to implement the OIOS recommendations. Once completed, the UNHCR revised guidelines should be followed up. He wished to remind OIOS to place recommendations in bold type in all reports, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions.

36. His delegation agreed with the representative of Cuba that the role of OIOS in enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (A/56/823) required further consultations. He would be interested to know whether the Joint Inspection Unit had any ideas and recommendations on oversight in the funds and programmes and would appreciate further details about the oversight function in the Office of the Iraq Programme.

37. On the topic of delayed reports, OIOS should explain the reasons for the delay in the issuance of the report on possible racial discrimination in the United Nations and carry out an investigation of the reasons for the delay in the submission of the report on UNDOF.

38. **Mr. Orr** (Canada) said that his delegation welcomed the report on the investigation into allegations of refugee smuggling at the Nairobi Branch Office of UNHCR (A/56/733). The investigation had entailed a unique and innovative partnership among Member States and the Secretariat, to which Canada had contributed. Follow-up by UNHCR and Kenyan authorities was essential. His delegation urged senior management of UNHCR to urgently implement a plan

of action for addressing corruption at its Nairobi Branch Office and to draw the lessons that might be applicable to its other resettlement operations worldwide. The report had revealed serious deficiencies that must be urgently addressed with sufficient staff and funding, and UNHCR must continue to report to its Executive Committee on implementation of the recommendations.

39. **Mr. Effah-Apenteng** (Ghana) resumed the Chair.

40. **Mr. Mustafa** (Sudan) said that his delegation supported the statement by Morocco on behalf of the Group of African States. He welcomed the effective and decisive measures taken by OIOS following its investigation into allegations of refugee smuggling at the Nairobi Branch Office of UNHCR (A/56/733), and paid tribute to the investigators whose efforts had led to the demise of that criminal network. The recommendations contained in the report should address those problems effectively, and OIOS should follow up on their implementation.

41. **Mr. Andreassen** (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)), in reply to a query from the delegation of the United States of America concerning the report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (A/56/823), said that it had been decided that there was no need to add an additional layer to the oversight structure of UNICEF. Existing mechanisms, which included an Oversight Committee and an Office of Internal Audit reporting regularly to the Executive Board, enabled the Executive Director to discharge properly her oversight responsibility. In 1999, the Board of Auditors had recommended that an external representative should be added to the Audit Committee, and, in response, the Chief Auditor of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had been invited to sit on the Committee. As a field-based organization like UNICEF, UNDP could share useful information on best practices. The quality assurance review which had been commissioned had agreed that adding an external member to the Audit Committee had been a significant step and there was therefore no reason to add an additional oversight committee.

42. **Mr. Repasch** (United States of America) said that his delegation appreciated the information provided by the representative of UNICEF. It agreed that there was no need to establish a new oversight committee, but believed that UNICEF could benefit if OIOS was

represented on the Audit Committee. As a major donor to UNICEF, his Government had supported and would continue to support all efforts to improve its oversight.

43. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), responding to questions and comments from the Committee, said that a joint horizontal audit of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund was under way, and that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) faced similar issues, including delays in receiving pensions, which it hoped would be resolved by the audit. Cooperation between funds and programmes in such areas was increasing and OIOS envisaged more interaction.

44. With regard to recommendation 4 on the so-called "boat project" (A/56/689), the captain's offer to repay \$15,000 to mitigate the loss had been withdrawn. The Acting Executive Director of ODCPP had implemented many of the report's recommendations and OIOS would reserve judgement until the follow-on inspection was completed later in the year. The question of morale at Vienna was taken very seriously and visits by the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General to the Office had helped to improve the situation.

45. On the question of refugee smuggling, in response to recommendation 6 in the report of OIOS (A/56/733), procedures for referral and a framework of operations had been put into place so that any future problems would be referred to OIOS expeditiously. An in-depth study of human resources management at Nairobi was needed, and the reason for including multinational corporations in that study would be to see what they had done to attract staff to their offices in Nairobi. Unless the high vacancy rate at that Office could be overcome, other problems would arise. He agreed with the representative of Morocco on the need to increase regular budget funding for activities at Nairobi. With regard to private sector fund-raising by UNHCR and other agencies, OIOS could bring its own experience to bear through its membership in their oversight committees.

46. In response to the statement of Cuba that OIOS had overstepped its mandate by preparing its report on the funds and programmes, the Office had been asked to determine how those bodies could strengthen their oversight. Ultimate responsibility lay with Member States and the Secretary-General for their operation, but the first step in improving their operations was to

ensure that appropriate oversight structures were in place, which was within the mandate of OIOS. The Office was not taking over responsibility for their oversight, but simply providing knowledge and expertise.

47. In reply to the Syrian Arab Republic, the cost of the investigation into refugee smuggling had been borne by the countries supplying the investigators. OIOS worked in close consultation with the Joint Inspection Unit, and conducted a number of joint projects, including an audit of the peacekeeping operation in East Timor. An audit of the Office of the Iraq Programme was in progress and thus far no problems had been encountered. The report on racial discrimination in the United Nations was in preparation and should be completed for the part of the Assembly's next resumed session.

48. **Mr. Yussuf** (United Republic of Tanzania), referring to document A/56/759, paragraph 8, inquired whether the funds used by UNHCR as its initial investment in fund-raising came from the regular budget.

49. **Ms. Sánchez Lorenzo** (Cuba) said that her delegation was concerned that the Secretary-General, in document A/56/823, was asking organizations to implement recommendations which had not been approved or endorsed by the General Assembly. Even though the Secretary-General bore ultimate responsibility for the performance of the funds and programmes, that did not mean that OIOS should provide oversight. She would like to know how OIOS would be involved in the oversight committees of those organizations and whether they would be forced to accept its presence.

50. **Mr. Ahmed** (Iraq), referring to document A/56/823, paragraph 28, said that his delegation would like to see the memorandum of understanding (MOU) to be concluded between the Office of the Iraq Programme and OIOS.

51. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation was aware that racial discrimination in the United Nations was a sensitive issue which must be treated with caution and depth. It understood the difficulty in issuing a report, but stressed its urgency. Applying a double standard would not be beneficial to anyone.

52. **Mr. Nair** (Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services), replying to Committee members' additional questions, said, in response to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, that, since money was fungible, he saw no problem in using funds as seed money for a new project, provided that the account from which they were taken was reimbursed in a kind of revolving fund arrangement.

53. In response to the question by the representative of Cuba concerning the implementation of certain recommendations before they were submitted to the General Assembly, he said that his Office's recommendations did not usually involve major policy decisions, which would indeed go before the Secretary-General or the Fifth Committee, but rather steps to be taken in order to ensure compliance with auditing standards or proper procedure. Most of the time, recommendations had to be acted upon as soon as possible and put in place as soon as possible, especially where a loss of money or control was at stake. In reply to the Cuban delegation's second question, he said that the funds and programmes were in no way coerced into following the recommendations of OIOS, but rather were encouraged to adopt them for their own benefit. Indeed, most funds and programmes had opted to implement the recommendations and, not having the capacity to carry out their own investigations, had appointed oversight committees; all of them had signed MOUs.

54. In response to the question by the representative of Iraq, he defined MOUs as simple documents in which an agency, fund or programme agreed that OIOS should be reimbursed at cost for its investigative services. The Office preferred to have seed money upfront and to perform the necessary accounting operations to ensure that payment was equal to the cost it had incurred in carrying out the investigation.

55. He took note of the comments of the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic and would consider them in order to determine how his Office could assist.

Agenda item 131: Financing of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (continued)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 (continued)

Revised estimates resulting from the strengthening of the role of internal oversight services at the International Tribunals for the biennium 2002-2003 (A/C.5/56/30/Add.1)

56. **Mr. Persaud** (Programme Planning and Budget Division) introduced the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/56/30/Add.1) on behalf of the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division. Initial estimates for the strengthening of the role of internal oversight services at the International Tribunals were for the appointment of six internal oversight auditors and investigators for the six-month period beginning on 1 January 2002.

57. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 56/247 and 56/248, had approved the requirements that had been proposed in the initial revised estimates, subject to further review at its resumed fifty-sixth session. In the document before the Committee, resources in the amount of \$430,300 gross (\$312,700 net) and \$493,300 gross (\$398,800 net) were being requested for the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Tribunal for Rwanda, respectively, in order to continue oversight services for the remainder of the biennium. Two resident auditors would be in posts by 15 March, one in each Tribunal, and the remainder were expected to begin work in early April 2002. Accordingly, resources were being requested for a period of 15 months for each Tribunal. Subject to the concurrence of the Fifth Committee, the additional requirements would be included in the revised appropriations for the Tribunals for the biennium 2002-2003.

58. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposals.

59. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) agreed with the representative of Cuba that the Advisory Committee's reports should be submitted to the Committee in all the official languages of the Organization and wondered how the Committee would be able to take note of a recommendation that was not in writing. He would have further comments to make on the matter when the Committee next considered the item.

60. **Mr. Chandra** (India) said that, since his delegation attached importance to oversight in the two Tribunals, particularly in view of their ballooning budgets, it had gone along with the consensus in December to approve additional expenditures for oversight functions and would work for another consensus on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendations.

61. **Ms. Sánchez Lorenzo** (Cuba) supported the remarks of the Syrian representative. Cuba had always stressed the need to have the reports of the Advisory Committee in writing.

62. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) reiterated that he had conveyed to the Fifth Committee orally that the Advisory Committee recommended acceptance of the Secretary-General's proposal and trusted that the interpretation had been accurate.

63. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) reassured Mr. Mselle that his delegation had fully understand his initial statement. He hoped the Chairman of the Advisory Committee would understand the fact that his delegation had complained repeatedly about that issue and noted that the representative of the Group of 77 and China had just complained about Advisory Committee recommendations that were not in writing. The Chairman of the Advisory Committee had a great deal of experience and should know that it was not proper to give recommendations orally, a procedure which had never been accepted by either the plenary Assembly or the Fifth Committee. If there was a resolution that allowed reports to be submitted orally and prohibited their submission in writing, he would like to know about it.

64. **The Chairman** said that the comments of the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic had been noted.

Other matters

65. **Mr. Kadiri** (Morocco) said that late issuance of documentation was a chronic and very serious problem. The Committee would consider the item on MONUC in two days and still did not have the related report of the Advisory Committee. Morocco attached particular importance to MONUC and did not see how the item could be fully considered without complete documentation.

66. **The Chairman** said that the Bureau would be discussing the issue of documentation that afternoon.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.